



Natural Resources Conservation Service
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June 18, 2007

NEW MEXICO BULLETIN NO. 300-7-04

SUBJECT: LTP - EQIP - FIELD OFFICE PROPOSALS FOR FY 2008

TO: All Offices

DUE TO STATE CONSERVATIONIST BY AUGUST 17, 2007

Purpose. To provide guidelines/timetable of activities for local EQIP proposals for FY 2008.

Expiration Date. September 30, 2007.

Attached is guidance and a proposal template for all Designated and Area Conservationists in New Mexico to use in assisting Local Work Groups (LWGs) in making recommendations on implementing the EQIP for FY 2008. Designated Conservationists are encouraged to move ahead with developing the EQIP proposal for their Field Office (FO). **The FY 2008 EQIP proposal is due to the State Conservationist by August 17, 2007.**

LWG meetings should be scheduled from July 2 through August 10, 2007. Please keep in mind that LWGs are advisory, not decision making, groups. The proposal from the FO is the final recommendation of the Designated Conservationist to the State Conservationist on the various aspects of carrying out the program for FY 2008.

The most significant change taking place in FY 2008 will be development of the new *payment schedule*. Work has already begun on this.

Designated Conservationists are strongly encouraged to develop criteria for screening applications to determine high, medium and low priority. This will help reduce the number of field resource inventories that need to be done initially, and provide justification if the lower ranking applications are not viable and not funded. You should also give consideration as to what technical criteria you will recommend for addressing tiebreakers.

Designated Conservationists should also give consideration to cost caps by practice. This approach can be used in the event that LWG are reluctant to pursue incentive payments or are concerned with one practice utilizing a great portion of the allocation.

There will be no dollar limit for Limited Resource Producers (LRP) and Beginning Farmers/Ranchers (BF/R) as last year. LRP's cost-share rate will be 90 percent and the

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cost share for BF/R will be 15 percent higher than the non-BF/R rate approved for the FO. All practices will be initially set at a cost share rate of 50 percent. If a different rate is desired, submit the justification with your proposal. Consideration to change the rate can be given to those practices that address drought conditions, fires, etc.

Last year we provided, albeit late in the process, an opportunity to submit proposals focusing resources on a watershed approach. That opportunity will be available again this year. The attachment will provide the template to submit proposals. In addition, the opportunity to address resource concerns with small acreage producers will also be made available. A pool of funds will be available for those field offices that recommend a small acreage initiative. Contact the Program staff for additional guidance on this initiative or submit as described in the attachment.

It is important that each FO proposal be submitted in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the attachments. If the guidelines are not followed, there may be delays in approving and publishing the proposal to the state website. EQIP cannot be implemented in your area until you have received authorization from the State Office.

Your proposal must be submitted in electronic format.

It is important that you carefully and thoroughly review this bulletin and attachments.

If you have questions on any of the attached information or guidelines, please contact Norman Vigil, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, 505-761-4445 or Michael Neubeiser, Resource Conservationist, at 505-761-4419.

/s/

DENNIS L. ALEXANDER
State Conservationist

Attachments (5)

1. Schedule of Activities/Deadlines (1 pg)
2. Guidance of Local Work Group Meetings (3 pgs)
3. F.O. Proposal Template (1 pg)
4. Recommended Practices, etc. (1 pg)
5. Watershed Initiative Proposal (1 pg)